

PRESS RELEASE

House Armed Services Committee Bob Stump, Chairman

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OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN BOB STUMP HEARING ON THE EXPORT ADMINISTRATION ACT OF 2001

This afternoon the committee meets to take testimony on H.R. 2581, the Export Administration Act of 2001.

The committee received this legislation on sequential referral for a period that expires today, although I understand that the leadership has indicated a willingness to agree to my request for bit more time to properly consider this important matter.

This legislation originated in the Senate where it was the subject of a lengthy debate spanning several years. However, once the Senate passed its version of the bill last year, the House International Relations Committee considered a companion version in August of last year that, in amended form, is now the bill before us.

The purpose of this legislation is to reauthorize and reform the expired Export Administration Act, which establishes how the government regulates the export of sensitive “dual-use” technologies abroad. However, reform is always in the eye of the beholder and the concern over this bill is that it will open the floodgates and allow some of our most sensitive technologies to flow into labs and arsenals of nations who have consistently demonstrated hostility to United States interests and could one day become military adversaries.

This is, of course, what lies at the heart of this policy debate. How do you strike a proper balance between the overriding need to protect national security yet still allow American business to expand its global markets in the competitive technology sector. I suspect there will never be a universally acceptable answer to this question.

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However, I think it is fair to say that the Armed Services Committee has over the years insisted that our nation's policy in this area properly account for the unique and increasingly challenging national security needs of the United States. While this cannot be an absolute standard, it certainly should be the overriding one.

To help us understand this broader policy context and how this specific legislation addresses these concerns, we have before us a cross-section of witnesses representing various perspectives on the issue.

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